

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4044
ANSWERED ON:23.12.2015
Linking Passport Offices with Post Offices
Shinde Dr. Shrikant Eknath

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is considering to associate the Passport Offices with the Department of Posts;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the aim behind it;
- (c) the manner in which the police verification is likely to be conducted for these applicants;
- (d) whether any agreement has been signed with the Department of Posts/discussions held in this regard;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the time by when a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) to (f) The Passport Offices have been traditionally associated with the Department of Posts for shipment of blank Passport booklets from India Security Press, Nashik. The Department of Posts is also involved in dispatch of printed passports to citizens. Recently, the Ministry of External Affairs has approached the Department of Posts for utilization of India Post network across the country for online filing of passport applications to address the challenge of digital divide. It was also decided to explore authorizing Post Masters of appropriate level to issue Verification Certificates for Tatkaal passport applicants within their areas of jurisdiction, in view of their local knowledge. So far as police verification by postmen is concerned, the idea has been explored but not found feasible as Post Offices do not have access to criminal data and citizenship status of passport applicants.